

WFOA

NEWSLETTER

May 11, 1987

MEETING

20th
Members of the UCD American Federation of Teachers Local will meet Wednesday, May 13, from 5:00-6:00 PM in the Conference Room, Cal Aggie House, 433 Russell Blvd. The agenda will include reports on activities, including the contract, current grievances, and systemwide issues such as workload and open files. Officers for the coming year will be nominated as well. It is crucial that all members attend, in view of the adversarial stance the University has begun to adopt.

Editorial:

The University and the Contract

I have before me a letter denying reappointment to a teacher who has served this University well for over ten years. It is a discouraging certainty that letters like this will appear more and more frequently over the coming months, and that they will be written in precisely the same line: this teacher does not meet the expectation of excellence as specified in the contract.

The letter implies that the contract is to blame; that, without unions and their interference, the lecturer may have continued teaching, since there was plenty of evidence of competency and skill. Such an implication is not true, but many people seem to believe it.

The truth is that the University has dedicated itself to reducing the number of lecturers, and that has nothing to do with contracts; it has rather to do with money: it is much cheaper to redeploy surplus faculty or substitute cheap labor--student and even non-student teaching assistants--than to retain lecturers.

Anyone seeking to deny this truth should explain why the University has made no efforts to define excellence in teaching; in my department, the only promulgated requirement has been that student evaluations be numerical, which I read as comparative.

Few chairs have paid much attention to excellence in teaching: few of them have discussed it, few have performed meaningful on-site visits, and few have communicated any policy except benign neglect.

Last year, before the contract was signed, an unknown number of lecturers--more than a hundred, probably, and some with over ten years' service--were denied positions. At present, in spite of the intent of the

contract, opportunity for capricious behavior still remains, and many will not be reappointed. This time, however, we will be told why, and if the reasons are prejudicial and absurd, as they often are, it will be made evident to everyone.

In these circumstances it is our responsibility to confront the academic community, not just with criticism, but also with continual challenges to stipulate what excellent teaching requires. Any criterion which has been established must be subject to the open, rational process of examination which the University claims is its particular virtue. Otherwise, it will be as if secrecy continued to mask a long tradition of irresponsible judgment.

Reopeners on the Unit 18 Contract

As specified in the Unit 18 contract, both the University and AFT can reopen certain provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding. The process began Thursday, April 23, and will run for five weeks, on succeeding Thursday afternoons and all day Fridays. The negotiations take place at Systemwide, Berkeley.

The people on the AFT bargaining team are Eric Schroeder, from U.C.D. Writing Center, Marde Gregory of the Communication Program at U.C.L.A., Roz Spafford of Writing Programs at U.C. Santa Cruz, and Cissy Freeman of Subject A at Berkeley.

The issues to be reopened are AFT benefits, merit, instructional support at the university, duration of contract, summer sessions, and salary. The university wishes to extend the contract, which expires June 30, 1988, to extend through 1989, and has decided not to reopen workload. All are encouraged to attend the several sessions open to Unit 18 members.

For more information please contact Eric Schroeder.

UC-AFT Seeks Executive Director and Publications Editor

The UC-AFT has two staff positions open for the 1987-88 academic year: a full-time executive director and a quarter-time publications editor.

Pending budgetary approval, the executive director position begins September 1, and will pay an annual salary of approximately \$30,000 plus benefits. Major responsibilities will include contract administration, handling

grievances, maintaining communications between the University Council and member locals and working with the executive board and with the publications editor.

Qualifications for the executive director position include experience in higher education, a union background, and excellent organizational skills. Access to a personal computer and knowledge of word processing and spreadsheet software are also desirable.

The publications editorship will run from September 1 through May 30, 1988, and will pay \$600 per month. Primary responsibilities will include writing and publishing the Perspective, writing brochures and press releases, and doing large mailings to UC-AFT members. Writing ability, knowledge of basic layout and design, and familiarity with desktop publishing systems are important.

Persons interested in either position should write to Tom Dublin at 13434 Calais Drive, Del Mar, CA 92014. Please include a resume. The application deadline is May 31.

The Annual AFT Western States
Union Leadership Institute
Leadership Institute
August 2-7, 1987
University of California
Santa Cruz

Uli West is an annual week-long workshop and training program sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers with the California Federation of Teachers.

Local and State Federation leaders, activists, and interested members participate from the states and territories in AFT's Western Region. Instructors are from the ranks of the ULI Leadership Development Coordinator network of national, state and local representatives, and staffs.

The program reflects the training requests and interests of locals and members, and the evaluations, requests and suggestions of previous participants.

Workshops are grouped into specific subject areas. Participants can select their area of interest which they will study for the week. Specific subject areas may be recommended for those with responsibilities in that area, but participation in a series is not restricted to that role. Leadership development means acquiring a basic understanding of the various activities of the local.

The Davis Local will pay all expenses incurred; see Kevin Roddy for details.



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